



STATE OF VERMONT
SENATE CHAMBER

Received & Inspected

August 3, 2011

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Chairman Julius Genachowski
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20544

FCC Mail Room

ORIGINAL

RE: Merger of AT&T and T-Mobile; Vermont

Dear Chairman Genachowski,

I am writing in support of AT&T's proposed merger with T-Mobile, currently under review by the FCC in Docket 11-65.

By way of background, I chair the Vermont Senate Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs, which has taken the lead in writing telecommunication permitting and funding legislation over the past four years.¹ In 2007, Vermont passed its first bill to create a special, expedited permit process and provide \$40 million in bonding capacity to bring cell phone and broad band coverage to unserved and underserved areas by 2010. That year came and went, but Vermont wasn't much further ahead in 2010 than it was in 2007.

In 2011, we further refined the legislation (S.78; Act 53 of the 2011 Legislative Session) and appropriated substantial funds to bring service to those same unserved areas. As the lead sponsor of S.78, the bill will further facilitate the expansion and upgrade of the state's telecommunications infrastructure, including its wireless telecommunications infrastructure.

Combined with federal ARRA grants, and private equity leveraged by the federal grants and loans, I expect the state will have broadband coverage to almost all areas of the state by 2014.

However, there is still a big question about whether cell phone coverage will blanket the state by 2014. Cell phone providers continue to invest in areas where there is a good return on investment. The rural areas are not places the carriers have made a priority thus far, and Vermont is largely rural.

¹By way of disclosure, in my capacity as a private citizen, my brother and I own two wireless telecommunications sites, and AT&T is one of the tenants at both sites.

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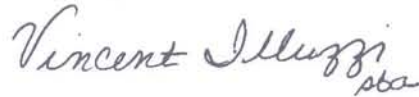
That's why the AT&T proposal is appealing to me and why I support it. AT&T has promised to deploy around Vermont the robust, 4G LTE mobile broadband network which we have sought. The impact on the economy of the state will be extremely positive.

After reading the publicly available material, I have concluded the merger of AT&T and T-Mobile will greatly advance the state's policy objectives as embodied in S. 78. It is my understanding that the proposed merger involves a commitment by AT&T to increase its planned deployment of a 4G LTE network in Vermont -- from 21% to over 70% of Vermont's geographic area. It is my further understanding that this commitment to expansion would increase AT&T's service offering from 47% to 90% of the state's population.

In conclusion, it is my opinion that the merger of AT&T and T-Mobile will be beneficial to the State of Vermont, and to interstate commerce, and I urge the FCC to approve it.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Vincent Illuzzi". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a small "sta" written below the name.

Senator Vincent Illuzzi
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Housing and General Affairs Committee
Member, Senate Appropriations Committee
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